

# CHAD PURNELL M.D.

CRANIOFACIAL AND PLASTIC SURGERY

## Pre-and postoperative care instructions Cleft Palate Repair

### Before the Operation:

- After the operation, your child will not be able to use a sippy cup, so it is best to stop using this a few weeks before surgery. Open cups or bottles with a soft nipple are ok.
- Follow the instructions given to you by our scheduler regarding eating and drinking. Try as much as possible to show up early. If you don't receive a call the day before surgery, call our hospital before 4:00 PM at 773-622-5400 to check on your instructions.

**Hospital Stay:** Usually, hospital stay after a cleft palate repair is 1 night for pain control and to make sure your child is drinking enough to maintain hydration, and to make sure they do not have significant airway swelling. On occasion, children may need to stay an extra day if they are not drinking.

### After the Operation:

- Incision care: No specific incision care is needed, just avoid any toys or hard foods in your child's mouth for 3-4 weeks.
- Pain Control: For the first 2-3 days, it is usually easier to **schedule** non-opioid pain medications rather than waiting to see if your child needs them. **It is NOT necessary to wake your child up for a scheduled dose**, just give their next dose when they wake up.
  - o Your child can take acetaminophen every 6 hours and ibuprofen (Motrin) every 6 hours, so your child will get a medication every 3 hours.
  - o Many children do not require opioid medication after cleft palate repair, but we do occasionally prescribe oxycodone. This can be given if you feel that your child is not adequately helped by the scheduled acetaminophen/ibuprofen and should be given **in addition** to these, not instead of them. This should not be given only if needed. **Opioid medications can result in your child being more sleepy, eating and drinking poorly, and can cause constipation.** They should only be given if necessary.
- Diet: Your child will be on a soft diet after cleft palate repair. They can eat any soft food that can be squished between your fingers, such as eggs, mashed potatoes, chopped up noodles, or liquids. **No crunchy foods of any type. Bottle and breast feeding are okay**, but for bottle feeding use a soft nipple. **If your child tolerates feeding with an open cup or spoon, these are preferable to bottle feeding.**
- Activity: Your child can return to quiet activities (no strenuous or rough play) after surgery. They should not put any hard or pointy toys in their mouths after surgery for 4 weeks or until they are seen in the office. **Your child should wear arm restraints (No-Nos) for 2 weeks** after surgery. They do not have to wear them if you

are holding them and can stop them from putting fingers or objects in their mouths. If possible, they should have their head elevated during the day and night for the first week.

- Bathing: You may bathe your child normally with soap and water.
- Follow-up appointments: Children are typically seen between 3-6 weeks after the operation.

#### **Things to let us know about:**

- **Call the Office if:**
- Your child develops a temperature of **over 101 degrees** Fahrenheit (38.3 degrees Celsius) – it is not necessary to check temperatures after surgery unless you feel like something is wrong.
- Your child seems to be having trouble breathing. A small amount of slightly noisy breathing is normal after surgery, but you should call if you have any breathing concerns.
- **Your child is not drinking fluids** and is not making as many wet or dirty diapers as usual.
- **If you have any concerns or questions**, contact us. We are used to receiving questions from parents and can help you decide if something is normal or abnormal after surgery.

#### **Contact Information:**

##### **IF YOU ARE SEEN AT SHRINERS HOSPITALS FOR CHILDREN:**

- Main hospital: 773-622-5400
- Inpatient Unit: 773-385-5590
- Nurse practitioners: Marisa Foss, CNP: 773-385-5597, mfoss@shrinenet.org (Tues-Fri) Patty Engebretson, CNP: 773-385-5595, pengebretson@shrinenet.org (Mon, Tues, Thurs)
- Outpatient clinic nurses: Jill McGuigan, RN and Sandy Ritt, RN: 773-385-5503
- Care coordination: Tina Magnole, LCSW: 773-385-5826 and Krista Bauman, LSW: 773-385-5560
- EMERGENCIES: 911

##### **IF YOU ARE SEEN AT UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-CHICAGO:**

- Main Hospital: 312-996-7546
- Outpatient nurses: Alma Moya, RN MEd 312-996-2512 Linda Duffy 312-996-4119
- Appointment Scheduling: 312-996-7546
- Surgery scheduling: 312-996-9313
- EMERGENCIES: 911